



University of Iowa

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Writing Sample

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Includes untitled poems, "EXPULSION," "WOMEN AT THE MARKET," "LET'S CARRY OUR SOULS TO THE MARKETS" and "STATISTICS."

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Dragica RAJČIĆ

Poems

How I laughed how I laughed how I laughed
About

Later.

The train was ten minutes late.
The woman held in her hands the last

Hidden
Laugh

For the journey.

The order of things

Dress on dress
Spoon on spoon
Knife on knife

Roof by roof
Man by woman
Dog by dog

Blanket across bedsheet
Hair across the face
Eye before brain
Foot before foot
Wood above next wood
Wall above next
Wall

Word on wood
Wood across wood
Letter by letter
Number by number

I
None

Zürich 1

29th September 2001

World crash America

Newspaper letters

No asylum for eyes

Eat me drink me ask me say

nothing look across come closer

So too and ever more every word

from your mouth will end never heard

in those eyes bright dark and still more

I see across to the wall to the table so easily

happy so unhappy cannot eat

and just like that from now on what about

everything that was never touched like this

Who can tell me today

What did we talk about

Two starry hours

central European time

The war has ended. The brother develops
Pictures in the dark.
The brother teaches the dog who escaped
to lose its fear
The mother awakens in the night
frightened in silence

The father sells stories
from yesterday and today
rich in victory.

the women have no-one to wait for

The son plays hands up.
The daughter wraps up a stone
and in case it gets sad
she draws it a tear.

EXPULSION

my brother soldier found
the broken photo of his friend in the bedroom
and later
while shooting hid
his eyes in his trouser pocket.

what one deserves

love
child
house
dog
tree
sun
rain
grave

love above the grave
child in the rain
dog in the sun
house without tree
the grave
empty

Helpless is the nakedness
of the old
their skin inviting
death in
bones hardened
a spoon
hard to hold
a butterfly
feels the day in
they tell us life
a novel
of things passing

for Mother

windowpane you dreamt your eyes open
who will know it

your sadness dressed in
words are we
grown up?

salad leaves early morning
drops of water touch the green
sun dries the night
be a mother to me
the hand like it, the salad with a knife
without roots

thank god for the day, doitsellit day
your ridiculousness laughs within me
laughing we are both
children

A house, nowhere

when

piece

by piece

belief

falls down

from words

what

do I do there

what do I do

I collect syllables

build them

a house, nowhere

on a sad day
dust fell
your shoulders are shoulders
when you transfer the poem to yourself
love stays on the
other side

lying
with me

like

something unheard of

let my parents, like cabbage heads,
spend the winter in the sea salt of remembrance
the house is sold
the suffering increased. In the light of the years
constantly changing eyes look at me from one
and the same photograph
where I trust
my face to God in peace.

once

teeth are placed in a glass
for overnight
the words bent into shape
for mother's ears
her silence
old stories again
who once wronged who

the worries grew feet
and danced for days in mother's face, in and out

When winter comes wood will be
pushed into the stove and
in there is warmth.

Nostalgia

the street looks different in new boots
between the cars faces flicker
in silence
and in the long train too the boots sit
alone amongst flat shoes
Everyone has a ticket
glasses carried in suit pockets
for special occasions
front doors are the same
and residents invisible
church services are well frequented.

Only sometimes I take off the boots
longing to have bare feet.

WOMEN AT THE MARKET

One sees them
in the summer, early evening
worried about their hair
and painted in
fashionable colours
waiting for
wonders.

They know that
age is not desired
and
buy
buy
and
buy again
youth
in the final sales.

Their half-grown
offspring
swallow pills and
fuck without fearing
the consequences.

Longing, yes, mosaic stones, empty squares, crevices,
to touch with fingertips.
And everything is here, the familiar smell of overcooked food,
Clothes collection action groups, forgotten addresses, lost notes,
chance meetings, greedily reading the newspapers,
deep woven dreams, waiting room for tears...

I want to shake the killed stories alive,
Judgements – no, too much for me,
A note about the Swiss: they even want to insure themselves
against dreams, in case they fall
from the magic carpet.

Snow has fallen, I want to eat life
with my tongue.
Down there graves are dug out, we come from
Our mothers' wombs, not from the earth, we don't live like plants,
seldom carry our fruits through to ripeness.

With one's own story, every judgement is a judgement,
let's not.
Dimmed, here and there flashes, darkness.
The film has been damaged by time.

Zahra Mani -Translation

LET'S CARRY OUR SOULS
TO THE MARKETS

Let's cry
Louder than ever before

A perfect chance
To swap our lives
sell our lives
Who will buy
Who offers more

Let's shout
Here you have
Light of the eye
And night of the eye
Here you have caresses for
Beautiful words
Here you have
The surgical knife
And the
Boredom of the sated

We are the ones
Here you have
Our photo albums with tilted hats

Here you have
Missing relatives
Here you have
Tears of parting
And damp birthdays all aunts

Let's carry our
Buildings to the markets
today
There are the courts and the
Soup kitchens
There are the
Substance addicts and the
Women selling bodies
There are our
Thousand things we never used
There are our
Travel cases and the aeroplanes
That fall with us to the seas
There are the cameras and war reporters and the

Supermarket cameras
There are the bent backs of mine diggers

The market is open
And omnipresent

No one wants
To buy tears
The smiles the dentures
The deepest falls
Cannot be expressed
In banknotes

Who wants
Our lives today
Without market value
And when nothing else helps
We write books
About our unsold
Unbought
Destinies

STATISTICS

According to an opinion poll, every second national resident wants more free time. According to another poll, women experience multiple orgasms on average every other year, seventy percent of the time in the course of an affair. According to statistics, the probability of being struck by lightning is greater than that of winning the lottery and greater than the realization of multicultural exchange in the course of an affair in one's free time.

Translation Zahra Mani